

Message Text

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41

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1551

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG, PINT, SO

SUBJECT: SIAD'S FEARS: REPLACEMENT OF SOMALI AIR FORCE COMMANDER

1. SOMALI AIR FORCE COMMANDER YUSUF HASSAN QTE DEG UNQTE WAS REPLACED BY PRESIDENT SIAD IN SEPTEMBER BY COLONEL MOHAMUD MOHAMMED GULAI, ALSO AN AIR FORCE OFFICER. WHILE THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING YUSUF HASSAN'S REPLACEMENT ARE BY NO MEANS CLEAR, WE HAVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON HIS SUCCESSOR WHICH MAY BE HELPFUL.

2. THE NEW AIR FORCE COMMANDER, COLONEL MOHAMUD MOHAMMED RETURNED TO SOMALIA IN MID-1975 -- PERHAPS JUNE AND PROBABLY JULY -- AFTER FOUR YEARS IN THE SOVIET UNION WHERE HE HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE SOVIET STAFF COLLEGE AT KIEV. HIS RUSSIAN EXILE REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE AS A RESULT OF A DISAGREEMENT WHICH HE HAD WITH PRESIDENT SIAD DURING LATTER'S TRIP TO MOSCOW IN 1971, WHERE HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY COLONEL MOHAMUD MOHAMMED.

3. COLONEL MOHAMUD MOHAMMED STUDIED IN EGYPT FOR APPROXIMATELY TEN YEARS -- FROM 1954 TO 1965 AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE EGYPTIAN MILITARY SCHOOL. HE SPEAKS ARABIC AND RUSSIAN IN ADDITION TO SOMALI. HIS TRIBALTIES ARE NOT RPT NOT KNOWN.

4. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT SIAD'S DISMISSAL OF YUSUF HASSAN WAS THE
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RESULT OF SIAD'S FEARS THAT AMBITIONS OF HIS AIR FORCE CHIEF HAD

OUTGROWN HIS PURELY MILITARY ROLE. SIAD REPORTEDLY VIEWED WITH SUSPICION CONTACTS YUSUF HASSAN MADE IN BAGHDAD AND HIS TALKS WITH IRAQI BA'ATHISTS DURING AUGUST VISIT WHEN HE DISCUSSED IRAQI TRAINING OF SOMALI PILOTS. SIAD'S CONCERN REPORTEDLY ALSO REFLECTS HIS BELIEF THAT CONTROL OF SOMALI AIR FORCE WOULD BE INDISPENSABLE TO ANY MOVE TO OUST HIM AND THAT YUSUF HASSAN'S LOYALTIES OPEN TO QUESTION.

5. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED REPORTS THAT NOT LONG AFTER OUSTER OF YUSUF HASSAN, SIAD ALSO REPLACED HIS IMMEDIATE BODYGUARD PERSONNEL AND IMPRISONED HIS CHIEF AIDE ON SUSPICION THAT HE WAS CONSPIRING AGAINST HIM BUT THIS IS NOT RPT NOT CONFIRMED.
LOUGHRAN

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